

Marie-Louise Berneri

NEITHER EAST NOR WEST

Selected Writings 1939-1948



INCLUDING

16 Anti-War Cartoons by John Olday

APPEARING 1943-1944 IN WAR COMMENTARY

FREEDOM PRESS



MARIE LOUISE BERNERI 1918-1949

photo by V.R

NEITHER EAST NOR WEST

Selected Writings 1939-1948

by
Marie Louise Berneri

with
16 political cartoons 1943-1944
by
John Olday

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1988

EDITOR'S NOTE

The articles comprising this volume were first published in the anarchist journals *War Commentary* (1939-1945) and *Freedom* (1945-)

The Axis and Democracy, *Fascists at Work in Algeria*, *War and Fascism* and *Record of the Third International* were written by Marie Louise Berneri in collaboration with John Hewetson; and *The Great Farce of San Francisco*, *Crisis over Europe*, *UNO — A Screen for Political Intrigue* and *Does Britain Show the Way* in collaboration with George Woodcock.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

by JOHN OLDAY

1943-1944

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Marie Louise Berneri was an active member of the Freedom Press group from 1937 until her untimely death in 1949 at the age of 31. This selection of her political writings was first published in 1952 by friends as a tribute to her memory.

As editor of the FREEDOM PRESS' Centenary Volume covering the years of *War Commentary* (1939-1945) and its successor *Freedom* up to 1951, I had to decide whether we should reprint these Selections as a Supplement or incorporate some of them into the main volume, the theme of which is contained in the provisional title of *From World War to Cold War*.

Re-reading these articles after thirty-five years I had no hesitation in opting for keeping them together in one volume with the addition of a number of brilliant drawings by John Olday published in *War Commentary* some of which were inspired by Marie Louise Berneri's editorials.

This volume being a supplement to the main volume does not pretend to cover all the major events of those momentous years. Obviously it must be read in conjunction with the other volume. Nevertheless, it has perhaps more relevance in 1988 than it had in 1952 for only now is the Left beginning to question whether World War II was the 'anti-fascist crusade' that they were led to believe it to be — for some a continuation of the 'anti-fascist civil war in Spain'. However, the process of re-thinking that war is a slow one. Certainly the Labour Party hierarchy which joined the nationalist chorus at the time of the Falklands War is not yet ripe for a revision of the Party Line on the 1939 War. Indeed Tony Benn in a recent



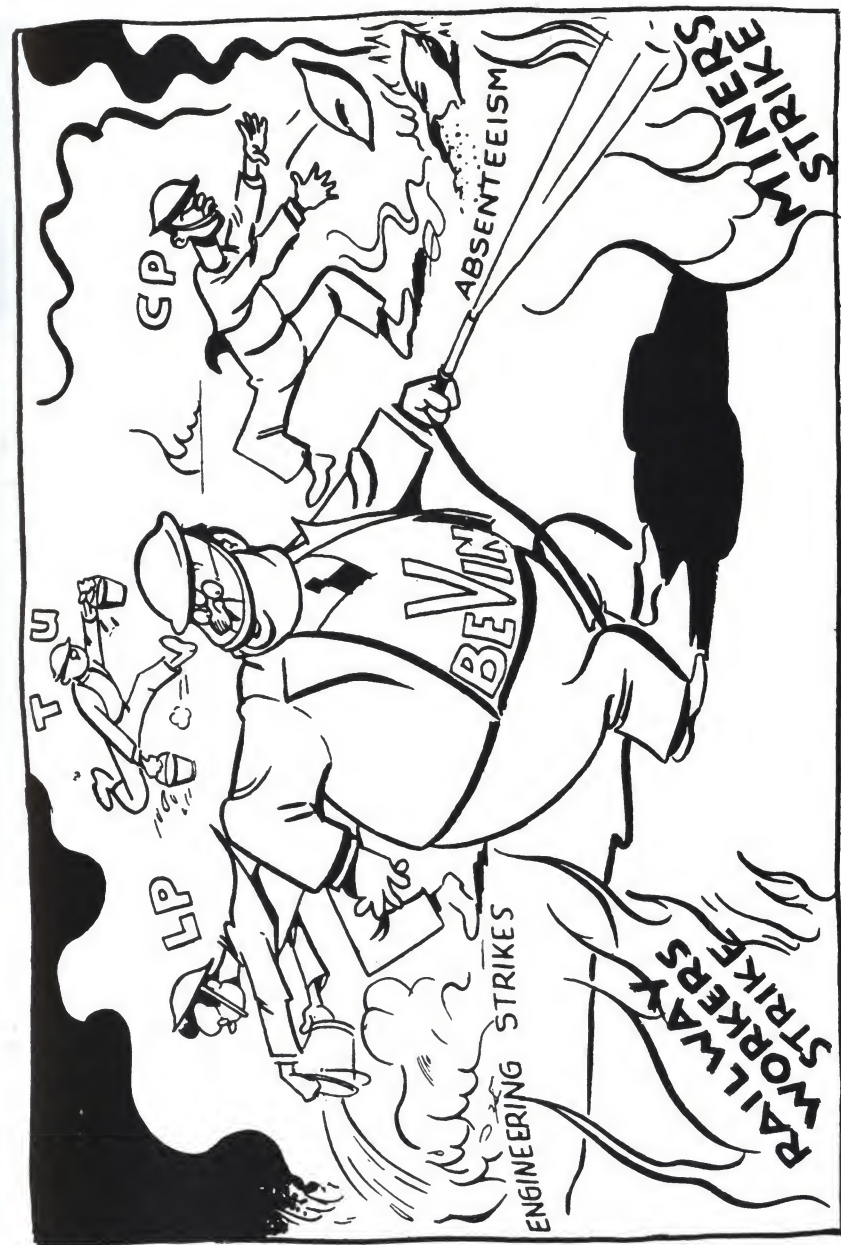
ii. The Folly of Bombing
March 1944



iii. No title
March 1943



iv. Beveridge Pie in the Sky
mid-January 1943



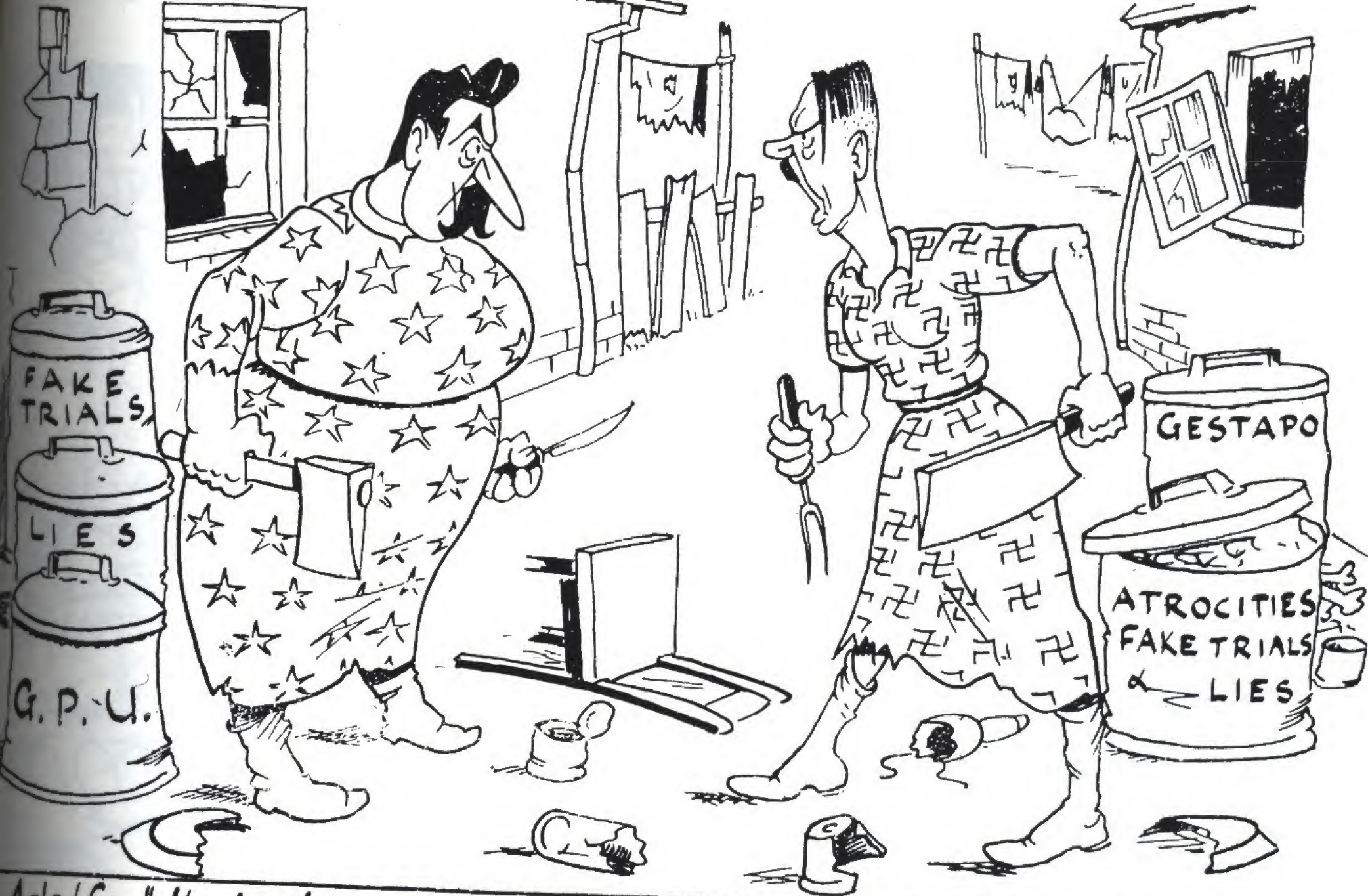
v. Strikes Increase
mid-April 1943

O LORD SAVE US FROM THE DANGER...



OF WAR

OF PEACE



Adolf: "It isn't only my dustbin which stinks!"

WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

Vol. 5, No. 10.

MID-MARCH, 1944

TWOPENCE

Strikes Everywhere

"It is sheer Anarchy", Will Lawther attacking the miners' strike in the Sunday Express of March 12, 1944.

SERVILE ADVOCATES OF the "war effort" would have us believe that strikes in war time are limited to Britain. Even the lying capitalist press is forced to admit the reverse, for through the fine mesh of press censorship filters news of class struggle the world over.

Most heavily censored has been news of the General Strike in Paraguay, South America. Yet from the few brief flashes from that country we learned last week that tens of thousands of workers were daily joining the strike; that transport and

other workers were vigorously defending themselves against the police in the capital Asuncion and that railwaymen were tearing up the tracks to prevent the military using the railways.

In Australia the Labour politicians pass new repressive laws to prevent mining and other strikes and threaten the miners with military conscription if they dare to exercise the most elementary, the most fundamental right of Labour—the right to withdraw one's labour power.

In the U.S.A., workers, particularly miners, auto and aircraft workers, use the strike weapon to force up wages and render impotent the anti-labour legislation of the Roosevelt régime.



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WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

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MID-FEBRUARY, 1944

TWOPENCE

DOWN WITH FRANCO!

SPAIN HAS RECEIVED a great deal of attention from our journalists and politicians recently. During the past four years of war a discreet silence was kept about Franco and his régime. The daily shooting

of anti-fascists, the prisons filled with revolutionaries, with women and children guilty only of having family connections with suspected elements, the suppression of every elementary liberty, were covered with an hypocritical veil.

The Press shed tears on Nazi atrocities, on imprisoned Frenchmen and starving Greek children, but not a word of sympathy has been found for the exhausted, starving, suppressed Spanish people. The



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WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

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SEPTEMBER 1944

TWOPENCE

The Betrayal of Poland

AT DAWN ON September 1st, 1939, the German Army invaded Poland. On September 3rd, 1939, in execution of a pledge to guarantee the frontiers of Poland, Britain declared war on Germany. On this fifth anniversary, after five years of hard work and hard living, with Allied victory in sight, it is proper to review the progress made towards Polish independence. It is but a poor excuse to say, as do some of our opponents, that the Polish issue was but a pretext for the war, which would have been fought in any case. However considered, the issue of Polish independence was a major issue of the war—the issue chosen by the British Government. The stand against war we took in 1939 was opposed by Lefts, Socialists and Labourites of the *Tribune* and *Reynolds* type; it is proper to judge

them too by the same issue.

So far from safeguarding the frontiers of Poland, the war has brought out an even more bitter and potent enemy of Poland and swung some of the 1939 friends of Poland in this country into spiteful hatred of their one-time champion. Stalin's Russia, like the Russia of the Tsars, and the unprincipled "Russia, right or wrong" clique in this country, are set upon the destruction of the independent Polish nation. No better test of their sincerity could be taken than this issue. Their arguments and sincerity are less convincing than those of a vendor of quack medicine.

Russian-Polish Relations

After the Russian Revolution of 1917 the countries conquered by the Tsars took the opportunity to break

WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

Vol. 5, No. 22.

MID-SEPTEMBER, 1944.

TWOPENCE

WHAT'S COOKING?

DURING THE PAST fortnight a perceptible and even obtrusive change has taken place in the public mood towards the war and its conclusion. Events move so rapidly that it is difficult to realise that only a few days ago we were still living in an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty caused by the presence of the flying bomb attacks and what seemed the imminent probability of attacks from V2 and other hypothetical terror machines. Then the end of the war was discussed rather as a compensating possibility for present dangers than as a certainty.

Now, almost literally overnight, the whole mental scene has changed. The flying bombs are almost forgotten, except by those who suffered directly from their effects, and V2 has been relegated by most people into the realms of mythical fancy. The sweeping military

successes of the allies, the apparent disintegration of the German army on the Western Front, have given rise to a general feeling of confidence that the war in Europe will be over soon, in a matter of weeks or possibly even days.

The recent actions of the Government show that they are willing to foster this idea of an imminent peace. The compulsory drills of the Home Guard have been abolished. Blackout is virtually to cease on the 17th September, and the hours of duty of firewatchers and voluntary Civil Defence workers are to be reduced to a mere fraction of what they are at present. Statements by political leaders and newspaper writers are all made in a tone of judicious confidence which is intended to impress the reader or listener.

We do not take upon ourselves the role of prophets,



